



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

TRI-CITIES CHAPTER 1192 NARFE NEWS

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
Advocates for Current and Former Federal Employees

NARFE: www.narfe.org Washington Federation: www.narfewa.org Tri-Cities: www.narfe1192.org

Reminder! FEHB Program Open Season – November 13 thru December 11.

2023 Chapter 1192 Officers & Board Members

President, Pat Turner	509.539.5659
Vice President, Nancy Crosby	509.735.3288
Secretary, Mary Alice Binder	509.378.2494
Treasurer, Liz Bowers	509.430.1836
Alzheimer's, Larry Williams	509.783.8554
Caller Coordinator, Darleen Wall	509.308.2765
Legislative, Mary Alice Binder	509.378.2494
Membership, Johanna Caylor	509.375.0739
NARFE-PAC, John Wetterling	509.545.8016
Newsletter, Mary Alice Binder	509.378.2494
Public Relations, Mary Alice Binder	509.378.2494
Service Officer, Nancy Crosby (Acting)	509.735.3288
Sunshine, Faye Vlieger	509.961.1095
Webmaster, Larry Williams	509.783.8554

CHAPTER MEETINGS/PROGRAMS

Meetings: 1st Wednesdays, except July/August

11:30 a.m., Columbia Center Red Lion, Kennewick

Lunch: \$25; RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

(Vegetarian meals available, if ordered ahead)

Avoid a charge! Cancel reservations you can't keep!

Note: Executive Board meeting days/times vary.

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

November 1 – Annual chapter “white elephant” fundraiser for the NARFE Alzheimer’s Research Fund. **Think about items to bring! (More info this page, right.)**

Menu: turkey, stuffing, green beans, salad, dessert



November 5, Daylight Saving Time ends. Fall back!

December 6 – Jeff Peterson and his mellow trumpet return with a holiday music program of soft jazz and voice!

Menu: meatloaf w/bacon, mashed potatoes, veggies, salad, dessert



*For Chapter and National-Only Members
Outside the Tri-Cities Area!*

You are MOST WELCOME to attend a chapter meeting, including lunch! A RESERVATION IS NEEDED. Please call Nancy Crosby or Darleen Wall by noon, Sunday, prior to a chapter meeting. See phone numbers, above.

November – December, Volume 2023, Issue 6

Vice President – Nancy Crosby

With the fall season well under way, Thanksgiving and the entire holiday season are just around the corner! Our chapter has events planned to help **GIVE** and



RECEIVE. The **give** is our annual NARFE Alzheimer’s Research Fund “white elephant” fundraiser. Bring a “white elephant” and/or other items someone may want, **but no weapons.** Tickets will be sold and can be placed in a bag for each item. When ticket sales end, a winning ticket will be drawn from each bag and the ticket holder with the matching number wins that item. We always have a good selection of items, enjoy a fun time, and raise money for the NARFE Alzheimer’s Research Fund!

NOTE: Bring cash and/or checkbook.

Then in December, the **receive** will be live entertainment to enjoy from Jeff Peterson and his muted trumpet and voice. Jeff’s holiday program has become a chapter favorite. So, I hope you can join us for the November and December meetings and programs!

At the September chapter meeting, Washington State Federation (WSF) President Cray Henry shared his concerns about NARFE’s survival with the ongoing decline in membership. *(If you missed his presentation, it is on the chapter website, www.narfe1192.org. Go to the Program tab, then the Topic/Menu tab for the September meeting.)* Recruiting **MUST BE** our primary focus to maintain the organization and its voice with our elected leaders.

Chapter member Ellen LeVee took President Henry’s concerns to heart! In the past, the annual health fairs during “open season” for the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program have been a source for new NARFE memberships. With recruiting in mind, Ellen and I have organized **an early evening health fair for ALL FEHB program eligible members, whether a NARFE member, or a current or retired employee, and spouses. FEHB reps will be there with information and to answer questions.** *(Continued on page 2.)*



2023 FEHB Health Fair

Open to **EVERYONE** eligible for the Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) plan

Representatives from Blue Cross Blue Shield, Kaiser Permanente, and GEHA will be available to answer your questions and provide brochures on their health plans for the 2024 health benefits season.

<p>WHEN: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7 5 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>WHERE: RICHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY Conference Room 955 Northgate Dr. Richland, WA</p>
--	---

Sponsored by the Tri-Cities Chapter 1192 of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)

www.narfe1192.org

(Continued from page 1.)

The 2024 health benefits rates are now available. We will have copies at the health fair, at the November and December chapter meetings, but you can access them at: www.opm.gov/insurance/healthcare/plan.

Also at the health fair, we will have a table with NARFE information, including the association's focus on **"PPP&B" (Protecting and Preserving Pay and Benefits)**. Besides providing health benefits information, we hope to add to our membership.

At our November chapter meeting, we will have the elections for our 4 officer positions for the 2-year period, 2024/2025. Nominations will be accepted from the floor prior to the elections. See box below for the current list of candidates.

2024-2025 Current Candidates
for
Chapter Elected Officer Positions

President – Nancy Crosby
Vice President – Mary Binder
Secretary – Debbie Carlson
Treasurer – Liz Bowers

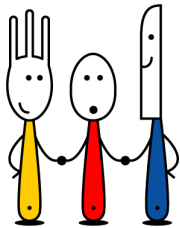
*Additional nominations accepted prior to and/or at the November meeting.
Elections after nominations close.
Sworn in at the December meeting.*

President Pat Turner is still working to recover from a car accident last spring. Thoughts remain with her. We hope she can join us again in the future.

Finally, thank you to all who are continuing to support our chapter. Your support is very much appreciated and needed. A happy, healthy and safe holiday season to you, and as President Pat would say, "Remember, family first."

Hospitality Coordinator – Nancy Crosby

Good news – NO price increase for 2024! Lunch cost will remain \$25. I have been meeting with the Red Lion catering staff and chef to finalize next year's contract and menu. Thank you to those who provided feedback at the September meeting on this year's menu! The finalized menu will be posted on the chapter website.



NARFE FEDERAL BENEFITS INSTITUTE

Service Officer (Acting) – Nancy Crosby

A reminder – the NARFE Open Season Webinar Series is in progress! The first webinar was October 12; the final one is November 15. All are FREE to NARFE members and will be archived on the NARFE website, www.narfe.org/institute, including the Q&A session following each webinar. Here is the series:

- ◆ October 12, *To B or Not to B (Whether or Not to Take Medicare Part B)*
- ◆ October 26, *Understanding Medicare Advantage Plans*
- ◆ November 2, *Choosing the Best FEHB Plan: Medicare Edition*
- ◆ November 9, *Big Changes to How Federal Annuity Recipients Receive Prescription Drug Benefits in 2024 and Beyond*
- ◆ November 15, *Choosing the Best FEHB Plan: Without Medicare Edition*

Another reminder! OPM has 3 new videos that "... walk federal retirees through certain aspects of navigating their online retirement services accounts." For more details, go to: www.opm.gov/news/releases. On the release page, click on "2023" and then "July."

WSF District I Vice President – Mary Binder

As VP Nancy wrote in her article, page 1, NARFE membership has continued to decline. During his presentation to the Tri-Cities and Spokane chapters in September, WSF President Cray Henry shared a chart that showed NARFE's membership at a high of 500,000 in 1985. As of May, membership was at about 137,000. To just stop the decline, "Nationally, we need to recruit 15,000 new members annually just to hold our current membership levels," President Henry explained. "If the decline trend continues, NARFE will become irrelevant by 2031," he added. SO, **recruiting members is THE top priority.** NARFE's federation presidents have been meeting to address "the NARFE membership crisis." President Henry is playing a lead role, including creating a "Crisis Management Framework." While the presidents work this issue, they alone cannot solve the decline. What a difference it would make if EACH NARFE member could RECRUIT JUST ONE NEW MEMBER! Ideas? Questions? Let me know!



Public Relations – Mary Binder

It has been a busy couple of outreach “out-and-about” months! Here is a quick recap:

- ◆ **September 15** – Chapter Treasurer Liz Bowers and I attended the Washington Policy Center’s annual Eastern Washington dinner at the Davenport Grand Hotel, Spokane.
- ◆ **September 21** – the All Seniors CommUNITY Picnic, Howard Amon Park/Richland Community Center ... maybe a NARFE table there in 2024?
- ◆ **October 5** – annual Elected Leaders Reception, The Reach Museum. (Photo, right.)
- ◆ **October 14** – the area’s annual Walk to End Alzheimer’s. (See *Larry Williams’ article, page 4.*)
- ◆ **October 17** – the fall Senior Times Expo, Southridge Sports & Events Complex, Kennewick. More than 80 vendors and about 500 seniors attended. Good networking with vendors and conversations with prospective members. Thank you to volunteers: Nancy Pochert; Nancy Crosby; Janice Lake; Debbie Carlson (pictured above); and to Beki Van Buren. [Looking ahead ... the Spring Expo will be Tuesday, April 16!]
- ◆ **October 25** – monthly Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce meeting/lunch. Program: Annual State of the Cities update. A reminder – the chapter is a Chamber member!



So, yes, a busy couple of months. Looking ahead to 2024, these “outreach” activities will continue and include, hopefully, some new additions. Meanwhile, remember:

- ◆ The annual CFC campaign began September 1 and ends January 15. Details at: givecfc.org/donors.
- ◆ NARFE’s annual photo contest is underway thru February 2. Winning photos will be in the 2025 NARFE calendar. See page 51, September NARFE Magazine, or go to www.narfe.org/photocontest.
- ◆ Coming by mid-November, applications for the 2024/2025 NARFE/FEEA Scholarship Program (for high school seniors related to NARFE members who plan to attend college in 2024.) Go to www.feea.org/our-programs/scholarships.



Legislative – Mary Binder

Will there be a government shutdown? When will there be a Speaker of the House? What is happening with repealing WEP/GPO, passing other legislation NARFE’s advocacy team is monitoring, etc.? Trying to stay abreast of what is happening on many fronts is time con-



Contacting our Federal Legislators

The Honorable Dan Newhouse, 4th Congressional Dist. U.S. House of Representatives

Phone: 202.225.5816; Fax: 202.225.3251

<https://www.newhouse.house.gov>

3100 George Washington Way #130, Richland, WA 99354

Phone: 509.713.7374; Fax: 509.713.7377

The Honorable Patty Murray, U.S. Senate

Phone: 202.224.2621; Fax: 202.224.0238

<http://www.murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm>

402 East Yakima Ave., Suite 420, Yakima, WA 98901

Phone: 509.453.7462; Fax: 509.453.7731

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senate

Phone: 202.224.3441; Fax: 202.228.0514

<https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email>

825 Jadwin Ave., Suites 206, Richland, WA 99352

Phone: 509.946.8106; Fax: 509.946.6937

suming and challenging, but we need to stay engaged. The NARFE Magazine, the electronic NARFE “Daily News Clips,” and other electronic updates are ways to do that. Also, the monthly legislative “action alerts” in each magazine are yet another way, e.g., page 8, October NARFE Magazine.

For government shutdowns, NARFE has extensive information for its members, nonmembers and the media on its website, www.narfe.org. At the “Advocacy” tab, the first entry is “NARFE’s Shutdown Resources.” Note: NO login required, so yes, nonmembers can get to this information ... and, if eligible, maybe will want to join NARFE! So, if you know someone who wants or needs this information, refer them to the site.

NARFE-PAC – John Wetterling

As this newsletter went to press, the 3rd quarter PAC reports for the 8-quarter, 2023/2024, 118th Congress, were not yet on the NARFE website. Stay tuned, but members can also access the reports at the “Advocacy” tab and then “NARFE-PAC” on the NARFE website, www.narfe.org. (Member login required.)

From a recent NARFE-PAC newsletter, “The fourth quarter of the non-election year is around the time when serious new candidates decide whether to run for Congress. It is also when incumbents want to put up impressive fundraising figures to ensure their campaign war chest is where it needs to be ... This is where NARFE-PAC comes in ... to bolster Fed-friendly candidates ...” Why? NARFE’s advocacy team believes “... strong fundraising by NARFE allies at this point in the campaign cycle can provide them with a head start needed to take on serious challengers.” So, are contributions needed to NARFE-PAC? Absolutely!

Contributions are welcome at chapter meetings, but there are other ways to contribute.



Return Service Requested

NARFE
Washington Federation of Chapters
Tri-Cities Chapter 1192
2802 W. 40th Ave.
Kennewick, WA 99337-2666

**Federal Retirees
2024 COLAs Announced**

**CSRS retirees: 3.2 percent
FERS retirees: 2.2 percent**

Treasurer – Liz Bowers

The chapter’s financial news remains positive. At the October chapter meeting, I reported the chapter’s combined checking/savings account balance was \$20,804.39. At the September chapter meeting, I gave members a preliminary outline of the 2024 budget, which I am continuing to fine tune.



Membership Chairman – Johanna Caylor

As of October 11, our Tri-Cities chapter had **514** members – **251**/chapter; **263**/national-only in the chapter area – an increase of **19** from my last report. **Distinguished members:** I recently sent NARFE the names of our members who have been NARFE members for 20/more years. There were quite a few from the closed Wenatchee and Yakima chapters. These loyal members should be receiving a certificate, pin and special distinguished member card. Are you eligible and have not received recognition? Let me know! **Dues withholding:** Painless! Only \$4.33/month! Send **NO MONEY** with your application or renewal form. Want more information or assistance? I can help! **Gift memberships:** A great holiday gift option! **Contact info:** Moving? Snowbirding? Temporarily away? Please let me know! Ph: 509.375.0739; email: annahojx2@gmail.com.



Sunshine News – Faye Vlieger
(Since the September/October newsletter)

Former members who passed:
Eileen Hughes Jackson; Jolene Kuhns (wife of Joe Kuhns, past chapter president, who passed in 2021)

TO:

CALLER COORDINATOR UPDATE!

Your chapter callers are hoping you are having a wonderful autumn and will have an exciting holiday season!

Our callers REALLY MAKE tremendous efforts to contact the members on their call lists to notify them of meetings and other important information. When they leave a message, **PLEASE** return the call so we know you received the message! If your phone does not accept messages, please contact me to arrange for an alternate notification method, e.g., a text message. No longer want to be called? Let me know. Thank you.



Contact info: Darleen Wall, (H) 623.556.0869; (M) 509.308.2765; Email: jdwall2@frontier.com.

Thinking of you/get well/sunshine wishes:

Lorie Bennett; Chuck Clayton; Dave Langstaff; Vicki Ravely; Bob Stewart; Ray White

Know someone needing a little “sunshine” or a special-occasion card? Call me, 509.961.1095, or email me, einvlieger@aol.com.

Alzheimer’s Research Fund – Larry Williams

SUCCESS! Our chapter team for the Walk to End Alzheimer’s, Saturday, October 14, John Dam Plaza, Richland, had 7 walkers and, to date, has raised \$590 for the NARFE Alzheimer’s Research



Fund. Thanks to those who walked and/or donated, and to Mary Binder, Johanna Caylor (pictured above) and Nancy Crosby (photographer) who helped me staff our NARFE table.



Webmaster – Larry Williams

Websites with more information: (chapter) www.narfe1192.org; (WSF) www.narfewa.org.

